# Tacoma Dome
## Link Extension

## Community Engagement Guide

**Fall 2021**

SoundTransit

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## Need materials in another language?

We have translated project materials on the website. If we are missing your language, please call our project line at 1-800-832-9230 and we will do our best to meet your needs. We will also provide translation services over the phone and at meetings if requested in advance.

## ¿Necesita materiales en otro idioma?

Contamos con traducciones de los materiales del proyecto en el sitio web. Si nos falta su idioma, llame a la línea del proyecto al 1-800-832-9230 y haremos todo lo posible por satisfacer sus necesidades. También ofreceremos servicios de traducción por teléfono y en reuniones si se solicitan con anticipación.

## 다른 언어로 된 자료가 필요하신가요?

웹사이트에서 프로젝트 자료의 번역본을 확인하실 수 있습니다. 원하는 언어로 된 자료가 없는 경우 1-800-832-9230번으로 프로젝트 담당자에게 문의해주십시오. 최선을 다해 도와드리겠습니다. 또한, 사전 요청 시 전화 통화 및 회의 중 통역 서비스를 제공합니다.

## Нужны материалы на других языках?

На нашем веб-сайте имеется перевод материалов проекта. Если там нет вашего языка, позвоните по телефону нашего проекта 1-800-832-9230, и мы постараемся помочь. Кроме того, по предварительной заявке мы предоставляем услуги перевода по телефону и на встречах.

# Overview

## Introduction

With the November 2016 voter approval of **Sound Transit 3 (ST3)**, Sound Transit is undertaking an ambitious mass transit system expansion. The Tacoma Dome Link Extension (TDLE) is one piece of the expansion plan that will add 9.7 miles of light rail service connecting Pierce and South King County residents to the regional light rail network. A companion project called Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) South will site an essential operations and maintenance facility to support the regional network in the South Sound. The TDLE project route travels through the cities of Federal Way, Milton, Fife, and Tacoma and the reservation of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. The project includes stations at South Federal Way, Fife, Portland Avenue and the Tacoma Dome area.

Planning for this project is underway and your participation is important. To get to construction more quickly, the project team has established an aggressive planning and environmental analysis timeline. Throughout the **alternatives development** phase, staff engaged the public in an intensive public involvement process that led to the Sound Transit Board identifying a **preferred alternative**, and other alternatives, to evaluate in an **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**.

Now, during the **environmental review** of the project we will continue to refine these alternatives based on input from the public, local stakeholders, elected officials, local cities, and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. We strive to create outreach opportunities that are inclusive and meaningful, and will announce these opportunities through a variety of communications channels. We hope that you will join us in planning Link light rail extensions that are valuable to all.

## Project background

Sound Transit is a public transit agency that plans, builds and operates express bus, light rail and commuter train services in the urban areas of King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. The Tacoma Dome Link Extension will provide fast, reliable light rail connections to residential and job centers throughout the region.

### Looking for more information?

Looking for a full history of and details about the ST3 plan? Visit http://soundtransit3.org/

### GET INVOLVED

**Visit our website and sign-up for project news soundtransit.org/tdlink**

**Questions?**

**Email us at tdlink@soundtransit.org or call 206-903-7118**

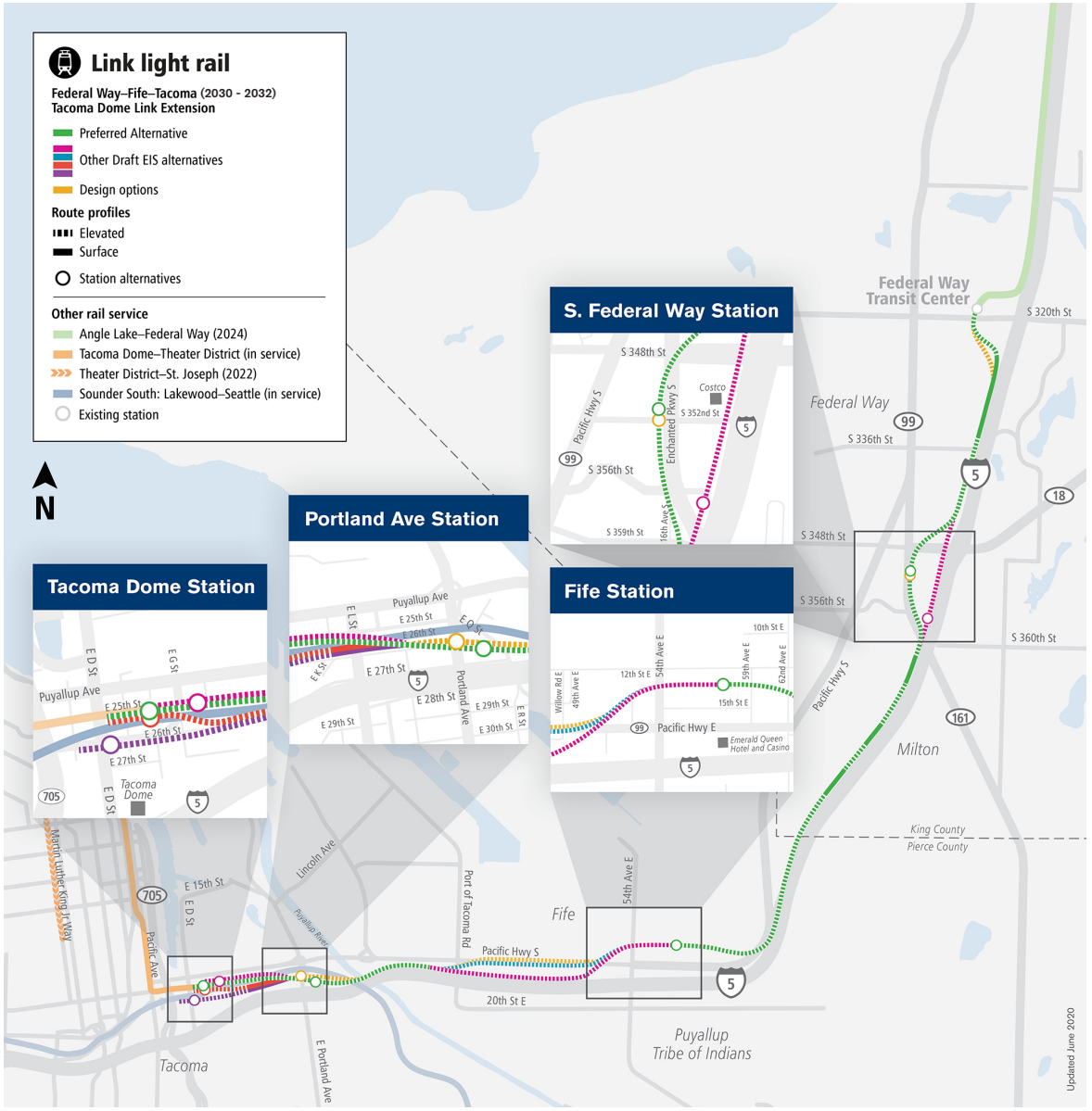
See a word in **bold**?

Find it in our glossary (page 19) for more information about that term.

**CHECK OUT THE GLOSSARY PAGE 18 ›**

# Tacoma Dome Link Extension project map

As of Summer 2019, the Sound Transit Board determined route and station options to study through a formal environmental review process called an Environmental Impact Statement. Some options are "preferred," and others will be used for analysis and comparison purposes, each called "alternatives." The EIS will study the alternatives at right, documenting the project's potential effects on the natural and built environment, and it proposes ways to mitigate unavoidable impacts. This process will take about three years to complete. This process will include opportunities for public, agency and tribal comment after we publish the Draft EIS in 2022.




**COVID-19 is impacting Sound Transit, our city partners, agencies and Tribes to varying degrees. The pandemic will have both financial and schedule impacts for Sound Transit projects across the region. The specifics of these impacts are not fully known yet. Sound Transit staff are continuing to advance the environmental review for TDLE and OMF South projects and are committed to communicating specific impacts as they become known.*

# Realignment

## Updated project timeline

The Board's adopted plans identify 2032 as the earliest date we could open Link light rail service to South Federal Way, Fife and Tacoma.

Some projects in the planning phase, including TDLE, have experienced non-financial delays in recent months. Many government and community project partners were forced to shift resources to addressing the human impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and were justifiably unable to review planning and environmental documents during that time. When combined with our own delays, these delays in individual agencies and organizations had a compounding effect on some project schedules, including TDLE, which faces opening date delays of up to two years even if projected financial impacts are eliminated.

The Board's adopted plan also identifies 2038 as the timeframe we can afford to open the South Federal Way and Fife station parking facilities associated with TDLE. The ultimate timeline for parking facilities will come into greater focus as we advance the environmental review process and project design, including examining cost-saving options.

### Looking for more information?

For more on the agency's realignment process, visit **https://www.soundtransit.org/realignment**

# Roles and responsibilities

Implementing this and other projects with the scope, budget and schedule approved by the voters will take extraordinary effort by Sound Transit and its federal, state and local partners. To meet the challenge of delivering projects as quickly as possible, Sound Transit developed a System Expansion Implementation Plan that embraces new ways of working together. Those adjustments include internal changes at Sound Transit, as well as new approaches to working with project partners, local jurisdictions, elected officials, community members and the public.

## Public

As a member of the public, your job is to communicate your ideas, concerns and questions about the project through a variety of communications channels:

- Learn about the project and ask questions.
- Provide feedback on topics and issues that interest you.
- Communicate to Sound Transit how you want to be engaged.
- Share information and discuss the project with your community.

## Stakeholder Group

The Stakeholder Group was convened during the alternatives development phase to provide a forum for community members to inform the development of alternatives for the project. The group included residents, transit riders, business owners and representatives of business and community organizations throughout the corridor. Visit the webpage for more details. Stakeholder Group members:

- Highlighted issues and considered trade-offs along the route.
- Provided feedback on alternatives to assist the Elected Leadership Group's recommendations.

## Station Area Workshops

As part of the environmental review process, Sound Transit will convene a series of Station Area Workshops. In each geography, the Stakeholder Group will break out to take a deeper dive into each station area. Local agency staff will join them for conversations around specific station issues. Sound Transit may seek additional voices at the table from the communities around each station area. This group and workshop series will convene throughout the environmental review process.

## Elected Leadership Group

The Elected Leadership Group is comprised of a Puyallup Tribal Councilmember, the mayors of the cities along the project corridor, Sound Transit Board Members, and a Washington State Department of Transportation representative. The purpose of this group is to reach local agreement around key decisions and work through project issues as needed. Visit the webpage for more details. The Elected Leadership Group:

- Appointed Stakeholder Group members.
- Recommended a preferred alternative to the Sound Transit Board based on technical analysis, on the recommendations from the Stakeholder Group, public input and the voter-approved project scope, schedule and budget.
- Works with project staff to understand and evaluate trade-offs, such as cost, constructability, development potential, environmental impacts, ridership, and others.

## Sound Transit Board

The Sound Transit Board will oversee the implementation and delivery of the project, and have final voting authority on identification of the preferred alternative and other major decisions. The Board will consider recommendations and feedback from the Elected Leadership Group, Stakeholder Group and public when making decisions.

Sound Transit Board members representing the TDLE corridor include Mayor Kim Roscoe of Fife, Mayor Kent Keel of University Place, Pierce County Executive Bruce Dammeier, King County Councilmember Peter von Reichbauer, and Mayor Victoria Woodards of Tacoma. For more information about the Sound Transit Board and how to contact, please visit: https://www.soundtransit.org/get-to-know-us/board-directors/board-members

## Interagency Group

Sound Transit will work closely and coordinate with a number of agencies and governments as this project moves forward, including, but not limited to:

- Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Federal Transit Administration
- City of Federal Way
- City of Fife
- City of Milton
- City of Tacoma
- King County
- Pierce County
- Port of Tacoma
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- Federal Highways Administration
- Pierce Transit
- King County Metro

## How did we get here?

### 2016

*November*
**Project approval**

We started with a voter-approved representative project in November 2016.

### 2018

*April-May*
**Early Scoping**

We asked the public for ideas for alternative route and station locations in April 2018. We also hosted a round of Station Area Workshops to gather more feedback on potential station locations. We examined to see if they met the project purpose and need.

*September*
**Feedback on focused route and station alternatives**

We asked the public, agencies and tribes to provide feedback on refined alternatives for each station area. This set of alternatives was evaluated against a set of 25 measures related to effective transportation solutions, support of land use and economic development, preservation of the environment, support for mobility, and support for a financially sustainable and constructible project.

### 2019

*April-May*
**Scoping**

We asked the public for feedback on the project's draft Purpose and Need statement, which environmental topics to include, and which alternatives to continue forward into the Draft EIS.

*July*
**Preferred alternative identified**

Sound Transit Board identified the preferred alternative and other alternatives to be studied in the EIS considering feedback from the public, Stakeholder Group, and recommendations by the Elected Leadership Group. A preferred alternative is a statement of where the agency is leaning based on information available at the time. It's not a final decision.

## Anticipated project schedule*

***Dates subject to change**

# Engagement goals

## Be proactive

Engage audiences, including the communities most affected by the project, in conversations that lead to a completed EIS and a Sound Transit Board decision for the project to be built.

***Our commitment to you:*** Through a wide range of communications channels, Sound Transit will let you know about opportunities to engage in the project as it progresses.

## Be transparent

Foster public trust through transparent communication, meaningful and inclusive **public engagement**, and timely responses to project questions and feedback.

***Our commitment to you:*** Sound Transit will communicate to you in ways that are clear, consistent and accessible.

## Encourage awareness

Encourage awareness of the benefits, effects and progress of the project.

***Our commitment to you:*** Sound Transit will use a variety of communication tools to share information about the project and opportunities to get involved throughout the life of the project.

## Be accountable

Ensure accountability by clearly communicating when, where and how public feedback was used to make project decisions.

***Our commitment to you:*** Sound Transit will ask communities, including those most impacted by the project, and the public to provide feedback and input throughout the decision-making process and at key milestones. Sound Transit will review and analyze this feedback and report back on how it was considered and incorporated into the decision-making process.

## Ensure accessibility

Ensure accessibility by presenting project information in easy-to-read and understandable formats, including in-language documents, with an eye toward accessibility for all audiences.

***Our commitment to you:*** Opportunities and methods for engagement shall be accessible and thoughtful to communities where they are held, e.g., through responsive online tools, or convenient times when events are held.

# Community snapshot

The Tacoma Dome Link Extension project area serves four distinct cities: Tacoma, Federal Way, Fife and Milton, as well as the Puyallup Tribe of Indians Reservation. It crosses through both King County and Pierce County. The region has a strong economic presence due to the Port of Tacoma and a thriving manufacturing, transportation and retail landscape. Demographically, the project area is diverse with significant foreign-born populations. Representatives from each of the project jurisdictions serve on the project's Elected Leadership Group. The snapshots that follow explore these areas and groups in further detail.

## Federal Way

Today, the Federal Way community is residential and commercial with a population employed locally and in neighboring cities such as SeaTac, Kent, Tacoma, Bellevue and Seattle. In 2012, the retail and wholesale trade sectors were the largest in Federal Way.

Federal Way has a diverse population, with a foreign-born segment that accounts for 23% of its more than 96,000 residents. The largest representative groups within this population are of Korean, Hispanic, Russian and Ukrainian descent.

## Milton

Milton began as a lumber-mill town at the beginning of the 20th century. The city is located near large employments centers such as Tacoma, SeaTac, Kent and Seattle. As of 2017, Milton's population was approximately 8,000 people. The demographic makeup includes 6% identifying as Asian descent and roughly 6.5% identifying as Hispanic. Of the 7.6% of the population that speaks a language other than English at home, Korean and Spanish are the most common languages. While Milton is primarily a residential community, its service industry accounted for a large portion of retail sales.

## Fife

Fife was home to more than 10,000 people in 2017. Despite its relatively small population, almost 23% of Fife's residents are foreign-born. Individuals of Asian and Hispanic heritage represent the largest portion of this international community. More than 32% of the population speaks a language other than English at home. Similar to Milton, Korean and Spanish are the most prominent non-English languages spoken in Fife.

The City of Fife has historically been an agriculture and food-processing center and is a thriving warehouse, distribution and transportation district; nearly 25% of all the city's land is industrially-zoned. Many well-known firms have locations in Fife, including Milgard, Lusamerica, Mission Foods and American Fast Freight. As a result, the largest employment sectors are transportation, and warehousing and manufacturing.

## Puyallup Tribe of Indians

The Puyallup Tribe of Indians are a federally-recognized Native American tribe with reservation lands primarily in Pierce County. The TDLE project is considering construction of light rail across the Puyallup Tribe of Indians Reservation and will span a section of the Puyallup River that is owned by the Tribe. The Puyallup Tribe have occupied this area for thousands of years, and continue to hunt, fish and gather here today. The Puyallup Reservation is one of the most urban reservations in the United States. As a result, the Puyallup Tribe has strong connections with the surrounding communities.

The Puyallup Tribe represents a significant economic presence in the region. The Tribe owns both locations of the Emerald Queen Casino, a major employer in the region with one location in Fife and one in Tacoma. The Puyallup Tribe also uses its economic development arm, Marine View Ventures, to invest in and expand on reservation resources.

## Tacoma

Tacoma is the third-largest city in the state of Washington, with a population of over 213,000. Tacoma is home to a variety of businesses, with major employment areas including health care, education, public administration, insurance, and social assistance. Almost a third of Tacoma residents commute outside of Pierce County to get to work. Tacoma is a major educational hub, as home to the University of Washington Tacoma, the University of Puget Sound, The Evergreen State College Tacoma campus, Bates Technical College, and other local colleges. The "City of Destiny" also draws regional visitors to destinations such as the Tacoma Dome, the Museum of Glass and Point Defiance Park.

Tacoma is diverse, with a population that is close to 11% Hispanic or Latino, 10 % African American, 9% Asian, and 1% American Indian or Alaska Native. Close to 9% of Tacoma residents identify as two or more races.

# Equity and inclusion

Sound Transit is committed to delivering projects that support an equitable transportation system. The Tacoma Dome Link Extension Project, like many ST3 projects, is large and complex, and will bring both benefits and impacts to the communities along the project route. During envrionmental review, Sound Transit will analyze project impacts and evaluate whether the project would result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and/or low-income populations. If there are disproportionately high impacts, Sound Transit will look for ways to mitigate those impacts and/or offset them with community benefits. We strive to engage underserved populations throughout the public involvement process.

In order to gather ideas and feedback during the environmental review phase, Sound Transit will provide meaningful engagement opportunities that are designed to meet the unique needs of low-income, minority and non-English speaking groups. Some of those opportunities include:

- Conducting interviews with social service providers and community organizations to better understand the populations they serve in the project area.
- Providing translators at public meetings and community gatherings.
- Translating key materials into languages spoken along the project corridor.
- Holding smaller meetings focused on individual communities.
- Meeting communities where they gather, like houses of worship, community centers and people's homes.

In addition, Sound Transit will conduct an **environmental justice analysis** in compliance with federal regulations. The analysis will describe the demographics of the project corridor, evaluate whether the project would disproportionately impact minority and low-income communities, and document our efforts to involve minority and low-income populations in the planning process.

If you are interested in learning more about this project and how it may benefit and/or impact your community, please contact us at 206-903-7118 or tdlink@soundtransit.org. We will work with you to find an appropriate opportunity for providing project information.

# Audiences

Sound Transit will actively engage a variety of audiences; in engaging our project audiences, we have broken them down into four key categories: community stakeholders, property owners, general public and the media. Roles for elected officials serving on the Sound Transit Board and Elected Leadership Group are described in the roles and responsibilities section.

## Neighborhood and community stakeholders

- Advocacy groups
- Local residents (renters and homeowners)
- Businesses, including small and minority-owned businesses
- Communities of color
- Community-based organizations
- Cultural groups
- Current and future transit riders
- Immigrant and refugee populations
- Limited English-speaking populations
- Low-income households
- People with disabilities
- Social service organizations

## Property owners

- Homeowners
- Condominium owners
- Apartment complex owners and their tenants and staff
- Business owners, including small and minority-owned businesses
- Commercial property owners and their tenants

## Public

People who live, work and commute in, through and around the Puget Sound region.

## Media

Print, digital and broadcast media, including community, local and ethnic media sources.

# How do I engage?

## Online

### Website

The project webpage, within the Sound Transit website, provides the hub for all up-to-date project information. The webpage will be updated frequently with the latest project information, opportunities to be involved, upcoming events and meetings, project materials and more.

### E-newsletters

E-newsletters will be sent on a regular basis to the project's e-mail subscriber list. E-newsletters will include up-to-date information on the project and be sent to people who have opted-in. Sign up on the project webpage.

### Social media

Sound Transit will utilize existing social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) to share news and updates about the OMF South. You can find us at @SoundTransit.

## In person

### Open houses (in-person and online open houses)

Open houses will be held at key milestones and decision points during the entirety of the project, including when updated project information is available, public feedback is sought to help inform key decisions. If they are able to follow health and safety guidelines for COVID-19, in-person open houses will take place in various locations and will be accompanied by online open houses for those who can't or choose not to attend a meeting.

### Briefings and meetings

Sound Transit will proactively reach out to community, business and interest groups to offer project updates. Any community, business or interest group may request a briefing from the project team by emailing omfsouth@soundtransit.org or calling 206-398-5453. We will prioritize traditionally underrepresented groups and can join you online via a remote meeting platform, in your workplace or training events to give quick project updates.

### Fairs and festivals

As a result of the COVID pandemic, we are unable to take part in traditional fairs and festivals. However, the outreach team will identify oppourtunities to participate in virtual gatherings.

### Pop-up outreach

Similar to fairs and festivals, Sound Transit may host pop-up outreach events, in coordination with key communities, so that project staff can reach neighbors in the locations they frequent, rather than asking them to come to Sound Transit.

### Property owner outreach and field visits

As environmental review begins, the project team will work with local property owners to understand potential impacts. The team will also begin data collection efforts, including geotechnical borings, surveys, environmental investigations, or other fieldwork.

### Property visits

In lieu of in-person visits, outreach staff will contact residences, businesses, and other entities along the project corridor by phone or e-mail to share information

# Other ways to engage

## Existing community engagement efforts

Sound Transit recognizes that there are many ongoing efforts to engage communities on a variety of topics, hosted by other organizations. To make the best use of time, we will join existing efforts already underway to provide project updates.

## English and translated materials

Fact sheets, infographics, presentations and other printed materials will be developed as needed throughout the project. Key materials will be translated into multiple languages. Materials may also include mailed notifications such as postcards or flyers. Streaming and interactive tools may also be used to enhance project reach.

## Media

Media coverage can help reach audiences that might not otherwise know about the project or have an opportunity to be engaged through other means. Sound Transit will engage community, local, regional and ethnic media sources to
ensure that accurate project information is shared and distributed via a variety of media outlets.

# Frequently asked questions

## Q How do I share my opinion?

There are many ways to share your opinion, including:

- Calling the project line at 206-903-7118.
- Emailing the project team at tdlink@soundtransit.org.
- Attending an open house or drop-in session.
- Visiting the website, responding to online surveys and following Sound Transit on social media.

Sound Transit provides involvement opportunities in conjunction with key project milestones, such as at the publication of the Draft and Final EIS. We strive to create outreach opportunities that are inclusive and meaningful, and will announce these opportunities through a variety of communications channels.

## Q How can I request a briefing from project staff for my organization?

If your organization is interested in a project briefing, you can email the team at tdlink@soundtransit.org.

## Q How will public input shape this phase?

Numerous opportunities will be identified for elected officials, community and business groups, and the public to weigh in with their priorities and feedback on the EIS and environmental review process. Public engagement will continue through all subsequent phases of the project.

## Q What type of feedback are you looking for during the environmental review phase?

During environmental review, staff will further study the preferred alternative and other alternatives to be studied in the Draft EIS. Your next opportunity to submit formal feedback on the TDLE route and station locations will be in 2022*, after we publish the Draft EIS.

Areas for feedback include:

- Assessment of impacts and benefits
- Selection of the preferred alternative and the project to be built.

## Q What can I expect as a project neighbor?

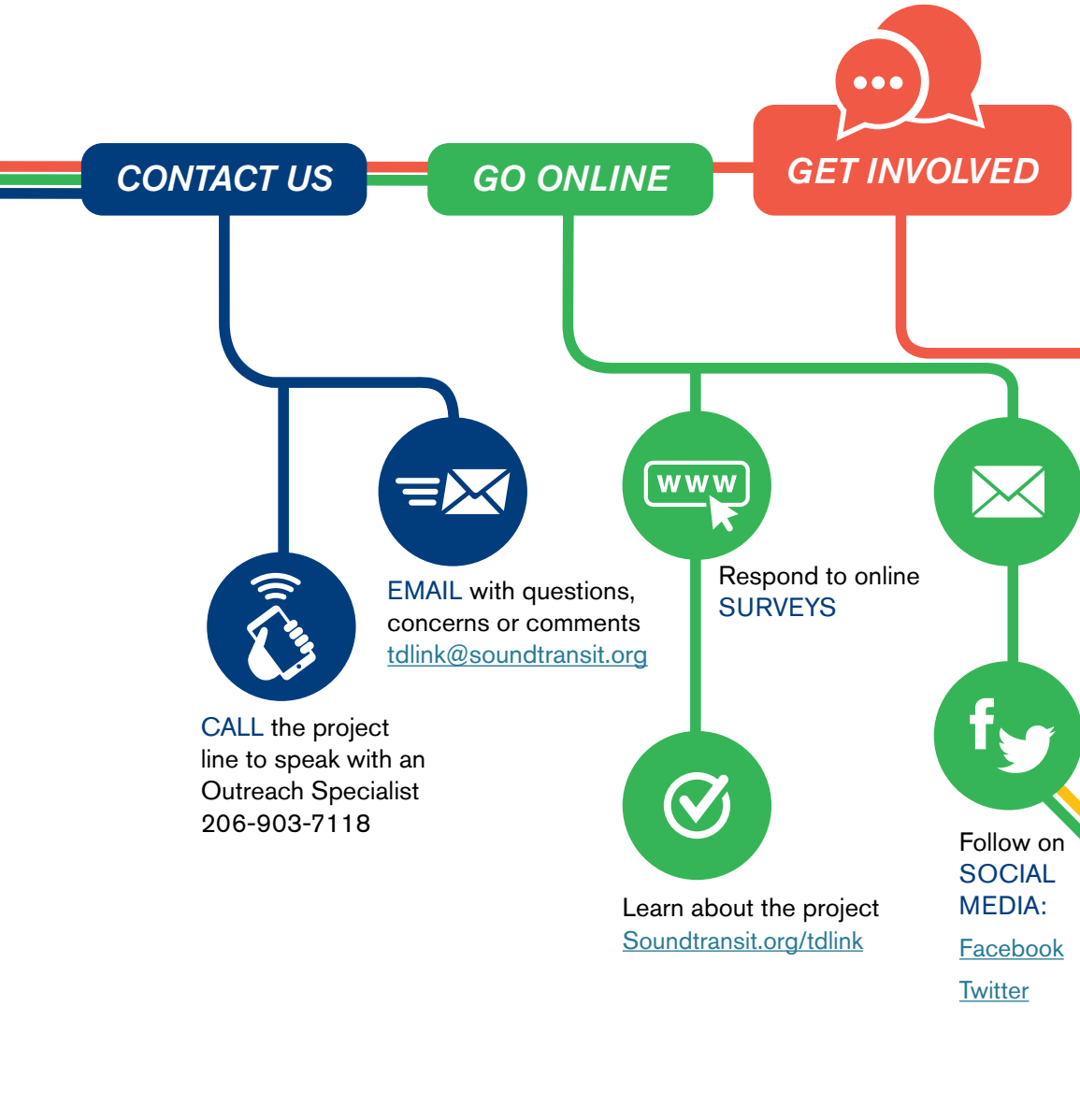
- If you are a resident, business or property owner near a TDLE route or station alternative, we encourage you to sign up for project email updates.
- The EIS will evaluate property impacts of potential sites in detail following further design work.
- An official decision by the Sound Transit Board about which route and stations to build for TDLE will occur following the issue of the Final EIS in 2024.

## Q Why is it important for me to engage now?

Environmental review is a critical time in which to engage because it is during this phase that the preferred alternative and other alternatives will be studied in the EIS. Feedback during this phase will help inform the analysis and study. Add new sentence: The team will respond to all comments made on the draft EIS.

***Dates subject to change.**

# Get involved




CALL the project line to speak with an Outreach Specialist 206-903-7118

EMAIL with questions, concerns or comments tdlink@soundtransit.org

Respond to online SURVEYS

Learn about the project Soundtransit.org/tdlink

Follow on SOCIAL MEDIA:

Facebook

Twitter

Subscribe to EMAIL UPDATES:

soundtransit.org/subscribe

**SCHEDULE A BRIEFING**

Sign up your community group for a briefing to hear more about the project and how you can stay involved.

Email or call us!

**ATTEND FUTURE PUBLIC EVENTS**

Come to public events during this phase to learn about how the community's input has helped shape the project. Provide your feedback and comment on current plans.

Stay informed about upcoming events: soundtransit.org/subscribe

# Glossary of terms

## Alternatives development
Project phase during which staff will assess the representative project included in the ST3 Plan and, based on additional public engagement and technical analysis, further refine the specific route, station locations and other project elements.

## Early scoping
Public process that engages the community to provide feedback and comments to help develop, evaluate and compare corridor alternatives as part of the alternatives analysis process.

## Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
A document used for decision-making that analyzes impacts of project alternatives.

## Environmental justice analysis
An evaluation of whether a project would result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority and low-income populations after consideration of impacts, benefits and mitigation.

## Environmental review
An evaluation of impacts and benefits to inform the public, agencies and decision makers about the environmental consequences of building and operating the project.

## Preferred alternative
At the end of the alternatives development phase, the Sound Transit Board identifies a preferred alternative, including route and station options. The EIS further evaluates the preferred alternative as well as other alternatives. The final decision on the alternative to be built will not be made until after the Final EIS is issued.

## Public engagement
A process that engages community members in a public dialogue about an issue that affects them.

## Representative project
The representative projects were developed after years of public engagement and were included in the ST3 Plan to serve as starting points for developing more refined alternatives.

## Sound Transit 3 (ST3)
The Sound Transit 3 Plan adds 62 new miles of light rail with 37 new stations. When complete, the Link light rail network will consist of 116 miles of light rail and 83 stations. The funding for ST3 was approved by voters in November 2016.

## System Expansion Implementation Plan
A plan that describes Sound Transit's approach to delivering the expanded system of projects as well as needed reforms based on lessons learned from delivering major capital infrastructure to date.

# CONTACT US

**Visit our webpage and sign-up for project news www.soundtransit.org/tdlink**

**Email tdlink@soundtransit.org**

**Call 206-903-7118**

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